

Erasmus Policy Statement – 2021-2027

The Erasmus Programme and JAC's institutional internationalisation and modernisation strategy

Fondazione ITS JobsAcademy (JAC)'s participation in the Erasmus Programme is embedded within its internationalisation strategy, which has a strong basis. In fact, JAC's Statute declares: "Foundation's activity is characterised by its openness to the world, as an intrinsic part of each action and as a commitment to promote and support international experiences and cooperation" (art. 2). This principle has a concrete application, as since the beginning JAC has organised and proposed to its students many international activities (e.g. language courses abroad, mobilities for studying, internships and an international joint diploma in Marketing), the most of them within the Erasmus framework.

JAC foresees to spread internationalisation within all its activities and Courses, with the aim of enhancing professional, social and intercultural skills and employability of its students, and for the professional development of its staff (teachers, tutors and coordinators, but also administrative staff).

Today JAC's students have the possibility to choose to live some international experiences during their studies. As a development goal, this must not be an added option, rather it must become a norm and be a common basis for each curriculum. With the Erasmus mobility of students and teachers, every JAC's student will live a period abroad for studies or internship and experience from the visit of foreign students and teachers and from the contact with them, also through blended mobilities. With the Erasmus Programme, this activity can be managed within an international tested and shared system, offering economic support to participants, too.

Also, the Programme helps the development and implementation of new activities by providing guidelines and facilitating the mutual exchange of international best practices and expertise. This cooperation also helps enlarging JAC's network of partners. Participation to new cooperation projects for innovation and the exchange of good practices will connect JAC with new companies and higher education institutions. The former are key contacts for JAC, as all its Courses have a strong connotation on practical application to real business environment (curricular internships represent almost half of the total hours of training of each course). The latter can cooperate both for the proposal of curricular studying mobilities and for the development of the partnership among JAC and universities for the delivery of a bachelor's degree.

This is a basic point of JAC's modernisation strategy: enlarging the network of partner universities, in Italy and abroad, which recognize JAC's ECTSs and enable students to complete their studies obtaining – in addition to JAC's higher technical diploma (EQF5) – a Bachelor's degree (EQF6) with additional 1-2 years of study, and a Master's (EQF7), too. This agreement is a solution to the fact that HVETs offer an extremely market-

oriented and up-to-date technical education but students graduating from them generally still encounter obstacles if they choose to continue their studies. Normally, in fact, students who want to get a Bachelor's degree have to enrol in the first year of university even if they have an EQF5 diploma. With JAC's agreements they will just need a "third year" of studying (in some cases with few integrations) after the two-year period of curricular training. JAC plans to have at least one partner university offering a Bachelor's degree for each course.

JAC's internationalisation strategy contributes for the building of a European Education Area (EEA), and, mutually, this Area helps with JAC's vision. One more demonstration of it is JAC's training offer, which includes completely international courses. These are classes composed of international groups of students attending activities in different higher institutions (each term in a different country, with lessons completely delivered in English) and achieving a final diploma from all the involved HVETs and the possibility to continue their studies at a partner university. This project – which started in 2018 with the first International Marketing Management course – and its development perfectly fit in the European Universities Programme, one of the pillars of the EEA. The network will be enlarged, including extra-UE partners, activities will be systematised (e.g. with an online common platform for the whole management of the course) and JAC will work for their automatic recognition on an international level, starting with the country directly involved.

As its policy, JAC is always looking for new innovative activities to start, also on the proposal of students and partners. No proposal is rejected a priori as everyone can be a learning: everything is evaluated and, whenever it is possible, support is provided, also by networking.

Foreseen Erasmus actions within JAC's institutional strategy

JAC intends to take part in the following actions:

- a) The mobility of higher education students and staff, both within programme countries and between Programme and Partner Countries.

These actions include different activities and many actors are involved. The first step is the research of partners, which is an ongoing activity: JAC is constantly working for expanding its partnerships. New partners (including both HVETs/universities and companies) are found through: specific activity of JAC's staff (JAC has an International Office dedicated to the international partnerships and a Stage&Placement Office dedicated to contact with companies); networking (institutions that are already cooperating with JAC often share their contacts, especially when developing new cooperative projects); participation to international fairs and exhibitions; contributions from teachers and students (teachers have contacts especially with companies, as

most of them are professionals and businessmen; students give their contribution as they can always propose institutions they would like to study at or companies for their internship); general research on the web. Once new potential partners are found, JAC verifies their availability and their affinity, both in terms of didactic/training offer and regarding their approach: as in JAC's vision, they must ensure that "the Person is the focus". Then agreements are set.

Simultaneously, JAC informs about the possibility of taking part in a mobility its students (enrolled and potential), staff and teachers, with the support of its International and Marketing&Communication Offices. Participation in international activities is encouraged and promoted at any stage: students and teachers are provided with information and the International Office is always available for any clarification. Each year at least one Call is open in JAC for the selection of Erasmus participants. Since the preparation of the Call to the selection of participants and the implementation of the mobility, many Offices in JAC are involved – each one for its specific expertise – with the International Office's general management:

- the Training Coordinator participates in the preparation of the Call: as he coordinates JAC's general planning of each training year, he also contributes for the planning of the international activities;
- the Coaches (mentors) help in students' selection phase, as they personally know students and can highlight possible special situations which need more attention, and during the mobility, with a continuous support to students regarding their whole experience;
- each Course has a Course Manager which contributes to the detailing of the mobility: supporting the selection of the most appropriate activities to attend abroad;
- the Stage&Placement Office helps managing the company-related issues for internship mobilities, from the initial selection or evaluation of companies for each student to the monitoring of each internship;
- the Administrative Office supports the preparation of documentation and manages the economic topics.

Focusing on Staff, mobilities for training are the most common at the moment, as both staff and teachers are eager to experience foreign environments, acquiring knowledge and know-how and creating new contacts for future cooperation. However, the continuous development of international courses boosts the mobilities for teaching, as JAC's teachers traveling to teach to their students abroad will more likely participate to mobilities for teaching to foreign students too.

JAC also operates for implementing incoming mobilities: together with outgoing mobilities, these are an essential part of its internationalisation strategy. To do so, it will be increased the number of teaching units completely delivered in English. For those delivered in Italian, it will be ensured that teachers have good English skills, and if this is not possible (HVETs teachers are mainly professionals coming from companies, who might not have English skills or time to dedicate for their improvement) this will be clarified in the

agreements with partners and alternative support will be provided (e.g. with teaching material translated into English).

This action directly contributes for JAC's strategy: students and teachers on mobility experience firsthand the international strategy and get to know new educational contexts, can draw a lesson from it and return it in JAC. Incoming mobilities will take internationalisation within JAC's venues.

b) Partnerships for Innovation and for Cooperation and exchanges of practices.

Participation into this type of projects will be proposed by the International Office or by partners and discussed and evaluated by JAC's Board of Directors, with the possible contribution of those Offices which would be involved in project's implementation.

Generally, participation will be encouraged as these projects help JAC's modernisation with the development of new practices and JAC's internationalisation also thanks to the possibility of better understanding foreign educational systems. Specifically, the selection of projects will depend both on their specific targets and goals (which must reflect JAC's ones or add new ideas consistent with JAC's policy) and on JAC's capacity of pursuing them and the contribution JAC can give. When the proper projects are selected, they bring to JAC new tools or methodologies which can be used in its activity, new ideas to be developed, as well as new international partners.

c) European Universities

This action reflects activities which are already a reality in JAC, and it offers a structured and recognised system where they can be embedded. JAC with its partners in 2018 started its first international course in Marketing, with each term taught in a different country (Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal), following a pre-fixed program. After completing the course students get the Italian and Spanish EQF5 diploma and can continue their studies at the Dutch or Portuguese university to get a bachelor's degree.

JAC's international courses are being implemented to give students the possibility to choose their own destination for each term within a range of possibilities in Europe (and, eventually, overseas), designing a personalised training path.

Considering their peculiarities compared to other JAC's courses, the international ones have an autonomous management, whose structuring is ongoing and where some activities are administrated on a case by case basis. This allows a personalised implementation for each student, but the common basis can be reinforced for a more efficient work. Participation in the European Universities program will help to automatize and systematise the management by creating guidelines to follow and a frame to respect, still maintaining flexibility.

The Erasmus Programme also represents a “brand” which guarantee some standards and principles, and which is known worldwide. It will help to spread JAC’s courses so that more international students and partners can be involved, profit from the courses and give their contribution.

Envisaged impact of the participation in the Erasmus+ Programme on JAC

The participation in the Erasmus+ Programme will have multiple impacts on JAC. It will actively contribute on its internationalisation (increasing both the number of Erasmus projects, partners and students, and the quality of activities); it will help the personal and professional development of its students and staff (an official procedure for recognition of staff mobilities will be set); the surrounding context will benefit from the presence of international people and from JAC’s growth (e.g. foreign students will contribute to the local economy; JAC’s Group of Erasmus students may organise public events).

Erasmus students’ experience will benefit their future companies, too, thanks to the skills acquired with an international experience. This awareness may result in JAC’s partner companies sponsoring students’ mobilities abroad or international courses.

Below are some expected targets, which will be used for monitoring the impact:

- + 35% applicants for student mobilities each year by 2022; + 50% by 2025; +60% by 2027;
- + 25% student mobilities each year by 2022; + 40% by 2025; +50% by 2027;
- + 35% applicants for staff mobilities each year by 2022; + 40% by 2025; + 50% by 2027;
- + 30% staff mobilities each year by 2022; + 35% by 2025; + 40% by 2027;
- + 3 new partner HVETs/Universities by 2022; + 8 by 2025; + 12 by 2027;
- + 10 new partner companies abroad by 2022; + 30 by 2025; + 70 by 2027;
- + 2 KA2 project applications (including European Universities) by 2022; +4 by 2027;
- creation of a European University by 2025;
- creation of an Office dedicated to the European University by 2025;
- + 1 joint international diploma course by 2022; + 2 joint international diploma courses by 2027;
- + 6 teaching units completely delivered in English by 2027;
- at least 1 online IIA for each course by 2022; at least 3 online IIAs for each course by 2027;

- at least 1 agreement with a foreign faculty for the delivery of the bachelor's degree for each course by 2025;
- 100% ECTSs automatically recognised after students' mobilities;
- 90% of the participants to a mobility are satisfied with their experience;
- 95% of Erasmus students improve their language skills;
- 95% of Erasmus alumni receive at least 1 job offer immediately after their graduation;
- creation of a Group of Erasmus students and alumni by 2022;
- at least 1 public event a year with involvement of Erasmus students by 2025;
- at least 3 accommodation solutions to be proposed to incoming students by 2025;
- + 100% international officers by 2022; + 200% international officers by 2027.